

Public Relations and Information Office,  
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ROLLO MAY SPEAKS AT LOYOLA NOVEMBER 8

Dr. Rollo May, the humanistic psychologist with the existentialist approach, who seeks to reinstate the old-fashioned concepts of love and will, the ancient ones of eros and the daimonic, and who has given a clean bill of health to "free-floating" anxiety, guilt and even today's endemic schizoid personality, will be the guest speaker Monday, November 8, at Loyola's 75th anniversary celebrations.

Dr. May is the author of many books, including the best-seller, "Love and Will", which is rapidly turning into the "source book for post-Freudian man". He will deliver a paper, "The End and the Beginning of an Era", in the F.C. Smith Auditorium at 8 p.m. Admission is free. Like An Apprehensive Obstetrician

While sometimes sounding like an apprehensive obstetrician hovering about the delivery room, Rollo May awaits the birth of a new world with much more optimism than many old-line Freudians. What he hopes the labor agony of our doomed old world will bring forth is not a world of animals or machines or objects but a world of human beings who know they are human beings.

He is an eloquent spokesman for the new breed of humanistic psychologists which strives to "throw light on the qualities of man that are uniquely human rather than qualities he shares with rats, pigeons or machines".

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A Founding Father of New Human-potential Movement

Dr. May is one of the founding fathers of what is called the new human-potential movement that got its start in the 1950s and was organized in 1962 under the banner of the Association for Humanistic Psychology. Several years ago when he felt "humanistic psychology had bred its own excesses" in the acting-out techniques of the encounter-group faddists, he resigned in protest. Last year, convinced the worst was over, he rejoined.

Because he sees man as a unitary being, he denies the importance of touch when it is isolated at the expense of the brain or concepts or thinking. He is also critical of the movement's "failure to realize that human beings inevitably develop potential for evil along with potential for good".

"Hitler lived out his 'potential' and the world is still recovering from it. This is the tragic dimension of life which adherents to this position forget," he points out.

"Also, I have felt it vaguely unfair to talk much about 'potential' in a society in which the individual - with the exception of opportunities to change sex partners, take a jet to hurry, or make money - actually has less than he had 30 years ago."

While Dr. May is seldom found at encounter sessions, he does not knock all encounter therapy, knowing that there is a vital area of communication that is well below the level of words.

Background

Dr. May's educational background is broad, spanning English literature, Greek history and literature, the fine arts, theology and



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clinical psychology. It was while attending summer seminars conducted by the celebrated psychoanalyst, Alfred Adler, in Vienna that he first became interested in psychoanalysis. But the outcome was a "call" to the ministry. After several years in a Congregational church he began work on a Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Columbia.

There is much of his own experience in his first book, "The Meaning of Anxiety", which was also his doctoral dissertation and is now a classic. While working on his doctorate and moonlighting as a counselor at City College, he developed tuberculosis and was given only a 50-50 chance of recovery. He believes the 18 months of perpetual anxiety he endured in the sanitarium saved his life.

"The patients who were gay and hopeful and tried to make light of disease, frequently died," he recalls. "Those of us who lived with it, accepted it, struggled against it, recovered."

This is what May calls "normal anxiety", representing the risk-taking side of man. "One can avoid 'normal anxiety' only by buttoning himself up in a rigid dogma of superstition, religious belief or an intellectual system."

#### Some Rollo May Thoughts

He believes that religious faith in drugs makes the same mistake as technology, namely, expecting something introduced from outside the individual to save him. He was among the first to see the early beatniks as a symbolic protest against the aridity of our mechanistic society rather than an expression of freedom.



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Now working on a book about violence, he favors "giving protesting groups" more, not less, if you want to avoid trouble. "When power cannot be expressed in the usual channels, violence explodes. When we block the daimon we are preparing the way for violence."

Dr. May defines the daimonic as "the urge in every being to affirm itself, assert itself, perpetuate and increase itself." It's a natural function that can be either creative or destructive and is normally both.

#### Apathy and Repression Real Evils in Society

However, he regards apathy and repression (not the sexual kind) rather than protest as the real evils in society. He views adjustment in our society as too often just a synonym for conformism and "actual loss of one's own existence."

"The well-adjusted man is largely a myth". In Dr. May's opinion, the schizoid man - a natural product of the technological man - is better adjusted.

"The more mature a man's values are, the less it matters to him whether his values are literally satisfied or not. The satisfaction and security lie in the holding of the values".

While noting that our times place more emphasis on sex than any society since ancient Rome, he is more hopeful of the new morality even when it includes premarital sex.

"It's not a perfect morality at all, but I think there is a new endeavour towards honesty, particularly among those who seek the human values in relationships, who treasure the meaning of the act rather than the act.



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He believes that relationship, intimacy, acceptance and affirmation are more powerful needs than sex per se.

"The old morality was essentially a superego morality. I don't think the new emerging morality will have much to do with the superego. Now we are getting an organismic human being who feels his way into the standards he is going to live by."

Dr. May is a training and supervising analyst with the William Alanson White Institute of Psychiatry, Psychoanalysis and Psychology in New York, where he lives and has a private practice.

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